

Victoria Street Newz

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we print"*

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THERE IS NO ENVIRONMENT

BY COMRADE BLACK

MAYBE WE'VE GOT TO START AT THE START?

MAYBE THIS BEGAN WHEN THE FIRST WOMYN OR MAN PUT THEIR HAND ON THE
CAVE WALL TO LEAVE A PAINTED HAND PRINT?¹

THE FIRST ACT OF HUMANS IMPRINTING THEIR WILL
UPON MOTHER NATURE?²

AND MAYBE IT CONTINUES WHEN WE SAID THIS BEAST
AND THAT BEAST IS TWO.

AND THIS TREE PLUS THAT TREE, PLUS THAT TREE IS 3.

AND SO BEGAN THE PROCESS OF TURNING NATURE INTO SYMBOLOGY?

AND ABSTRACTIONS LEADING TO TECHNOLOGY, LEADING TO ABSTRACTIONS,
LEADING FURTHER, AND FURTHER AWAY FROM NATURE, UNTIL WE DON'T EVEN
REMEMBER THAT WE ARE ANIMALS...

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About Street Newz

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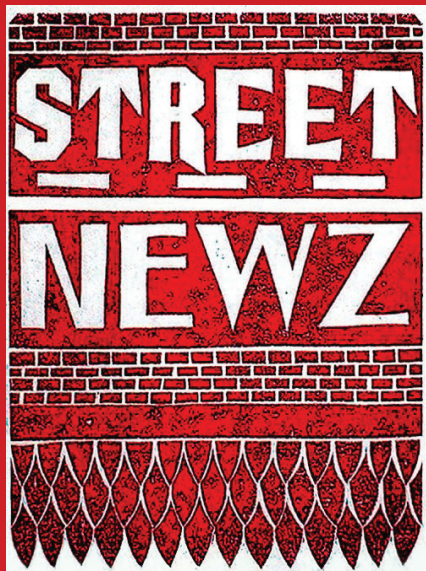


Submissions (due by the 1st Friday for the next month's issue), letters, or donations can be mailed or delivered to our mailbox at:

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just another rant

janinebandcroft.blogspot.com

Since 2008, our little newspaper has offered space to promote Victoria's annual Anarchist Bookfair. Over the years we've learned about anarchy's history, about anarchist art and philosophy, and we've read contemporary accounts from many who self-define as anarchists.

Only twice have I faced tough editorial decisions. Freedom of expression is not something I suppress easily, and I do believe that diversity of tactics is an important discussion, but newsprint is not the best place for it. Radio and social media provide a more conducive medium to discuss the merits and disadvantages of literal attempts to smash the state.

Thankfully, most anarchist themed submissions I receive are thoughtful reflections on the ways hierarchy and patriarchy and capitalism have failed to establish egalitarian societies. There are as many constructive and creative ideas about how better to organize ourselves, and how establish a planet friendly society, as there are individuals thinking about it. Locally, many individuals and organizations promote "do it yourself" activities, whether or not they specifically label themselves "anarchist." Boulevard or guerrilla gardens, earth defense and civil disobedience training camps, Food Not Bombs, support for humanitarian aid caravans to Gaza and Cuba ... these are all anarchist style do-it-yourself activities that are creatively and cooperatively constructing a better world without waiting for or expecting leadership from government, and without leaving a pile of burning rubble in their wake.

Some may wonder why I support the Cuban revolution, which used violence to overthrow an evil dictatorship, while I remain unconvinced that property damage is a viable strategy here and now. I do not believe a Cuba style revolution is possible today. The big guns have too many big guns. And they'll never let something like that happen again.

The world in 1959 was a vastly different place, and those revolutionaries had prepared a precise plan that included regime change, and the construction of a new egalitarian society. When Fidel and Raúl Castro, Camilo Cienfuegos, Che Guevara and 78 others bravely sailed from Mexico to the Sierra Maestra mountains in southeastern Cuba they grew local support. Education was a key component in their strategy. Peasants learned basic literacy skills in jungle classrooms, and as a result many Cubans were inspired to work together to overthrow the gambling and prostitution empire they knew was dependent on their poverty and misery for its survival.

Yes, people were killed. Yes, after Fulgencio Batista was removed from the Presidential Palace there were military style solutions to

deal with the insurgents. Yes, some Cubans did not appreciate the socialist restructuring of their society, and still harbour hatred for the revolution. I do not support or endorse the violence of the Cuban revolution, but I recognize it was an historical event whose real success lies not so much in the way it was implemented, but in the society that has resulted. Please read Gerry Bill's article on page 8 for more on that.

Over 50 years have passed since the Cuban Revolution. Socialism is succeeding, against all odds, while capitalism is nearing its inevitable end. An economic system that depends on infinite growth just can't succeed on a planet with finite resources. People are also realizing that capitalism is failing them as individuals, that the distribution of wealth will never happen voluntarily, that our very survival as a species on this planet depends upon alternate solutions. They're angry, and tired of being told what to do, so when an opportunity to join a mob and smash a few windows presents itself, it doesn't take much encouragement to attract participants. But when the fires are extinguished, the windows repaired, and the shops re-established, what has changed?

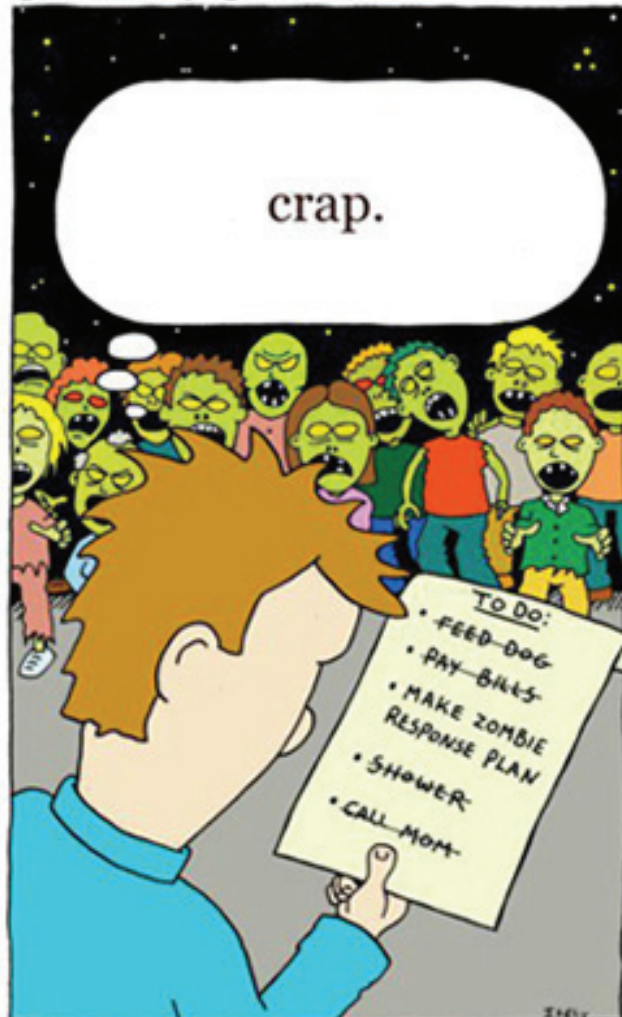
Whatever you feel about the London Riots, I think we can agree that it won't be a big surprise when, in preparation for the 2012 London Olympics, an announcement is made about the biggest, baddest "security" force those "games" have ever witnessed. The International Olympic Committee are, afterall, the neo-imperialists, the new empire builders, marching around the world displacing indigenous and poor people while laying claim to the places those people have called home through generations. The IOC are the ultimate capitalists, and the London Riots will serve them well.

I do not like the energy of violence. I do not like to feel rage, whether or not it's justified in my mind. I understand that the energy good people channel into smashing windows is the same energy that bad people use to smash our lives. The motivation may be different, but the energy is the same.

Being vegan is a revolutionary act, a radical one that I can easily do every single day. I refuse to participate in the violence and oppression that transforms sentient beings into food, shampoo, wine, and clothing. Choosing a vegan lifestyle is healthier for me, for the planet, and for all the creatures who do not suffer or die for my momentary corporeal pleasure. I did not enjoy watching Vancouver get smashed up, and I did not enjoy watching London burn. Call me a traitor to the movement, misguided, uneducated, a moron, a renegade, perhaps even an informant. I will not worship at the altar of death, or cavort with beings who are constructing the new society on a violent, angry foundation.

Janine Bandcroft is the founder and co-ordinator of the Victoria Street Newz. She's also an amateur photographer, particularly pleased with the cover photo taken through an unsmashed shop window in Vancouver.

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Galluping Along

by Brian Mason

The trouble with statistics is that we believe too much in them. Boldly we extrapolate, projecting smooth trend lines to see where we might be headed. Yet we're always wrong. Statistics can help us only in understanding a little of the present and a wee bit of how we got to where we are. Marshall McLuhan, himself no lover of technology or the futuristic, understood our quandary: "We look at the present through a rearview mirror. We march backwards into the future."

Improvements in the collection and computation of statistics have not transformed us into a society of futurologist savants. To the contrary. All they serve up is a constant diet of appetizers at the expense of the main course – until, that is, the actual future is dumped messily (surprise! surprise!) into our laps. It's like, Hey, why didn't we see this coming? Well, because we are not capable; that's why not.

The "why not" is because statistics manage, at once, both to simplify things and overwhelm us. Both aspects are problematic. Burying us under a glut of information, they make us want to hold up a white flag of surrender. Ironically, however, just about everything important must be jettisoned from statistical models in order for their prediction formulae not to become swamped with reality. The foundation they purport to build, in other words, is illusory. All those torrents of data we download/upload delude us into thinking we are mapping the road ahead – but we can never adequately control for the future.

Consider one prevalent application of our love of statistics: political polling.

A CBC commentator mentioned that polls were being conducted by one political party or another every few hours in the days leading up to the May 2011 federal election. They were a big deal, their results breathlessly anticipated and, by some, trumpeted. Why? Because political parties were trying to (be able to) predict and influence the future. Would they gain or

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Street Soccer Update

By Richard Clemens

My “street name” is Rocket. aka Richard Clemens. I was born here in 73’ on unceded Coast Salish Territory and grew up in Gordon Head. This year I joined the first ever Victoria Street Soccer team and will be representing Victorians and Canadians suffering or enjoying (depending on how you look at it karmically speaking) living in poverty at the 2011 Homeless World Cup of Street Soccer in Paris, France. Apparently, we are playing right underneath the Eiffel Tower beginning this August 21st, 2011.

On July 23rd, Victoria Street Soccer held its first annual Street Soccer Tournament to raise money for my trip and Victoria Street Soccer. A very special thank-you to Yellow Cabs of Victoria who will be buying my plane ticket! Fantastic guys, just amazing! Love and respect! Thank-you to Rob Fleming and the Fernwood crew who took home the first annual street soccer trophy by beating Victoria Dreams in the final 1-0 at this Round Robin Tournament which was held at Topaz Park. The VICPD (boys in blue) showed up ready to compete, PEACE boys! Relax a little, it is just a game eh? (I should take my own advice..) a special congratz to Will who received the MVP award for his brilliant playing for the Victoria Dreams. Way to go Will!

A big, gigantic thank-you to Katie DeRosa, Ned le Beck, Erin Cardone, Rik Sweeney, the Victoria Dreams Team and my new brothers and sisters, our caterer Andrew from Fat Daddy’s for keeping our bellies full, you are the man! Wanda for her help and kindness, Alison Acker and Kym for emotional support, the media, Janine Bandcroft, Rose Henry and the Committee to End Homelessness, Debbie Thompson w/ the Coalition to End Homelessness, AVI (Minda and Shane) and all donors of love, thank-you. Paul for the haircut and bag for my trip. To all the other beautiful people out there that sent me e-mails and donations, thank-you so much! Cheers to Rev Al & Our Place even tho they didn’t field a team to sponsor one of their own and all my love to the extended street family out there. Take care of each other out there and look out for each other! Last but not least my neighbor Patrick who will kindly look after the “Meatball Princess” while I am away.

Victoria Street Soccer is on-going and we meet native time 2:30ish every Sunday at Vic High. We have another tournament coming up in August and always need new players. They are also looking to form an all female team besides the co-ed team we have now as well. Come on out if you want to do something different in a relaxed but competitive atmosphere (something for everybody) for people who might not be able to or feel comfortable joining a league team. This is very relaxed and no pressure to play well etc. Fat Daddy’s is at every practise with burgers and pork sandwiches etc for players and supporters so come on out!

This world cup of street soccer actually morphed out of local street newspaper organizations such as *Victoria Street Newz* so please support your independent local media please. It is very important to have independent media!

Thank-you, loves and respects,
Richard “Rocket” Clemens

For more information about the Homeless World Cup visit www.homelessworldcup.org. For info about Victoria’s Street Soccer scene see www.victoriastreetssoccer.com.



Contemplating Norway’s Tragedy

by David Rovics

I’m as shocked as most other people are at the fact that there are people in our midst who could be so socially alienated that they could justify the killing of scores of young people on the basis that they are politically progressive. Equally shocking is the scale of this slaughter.

The nature of this event reminds me both of Oklahoma City and Columbine, which have their similarities in nature and their differences. Every time a Columbine-style massacre takes place in the US, almost always carried out by a young white man who resents females and other targets, whose targets are always primarily young, I wonder if we are somehow going to come to terms with the extent to which our society is flawed, how much social alienation is becoming increasingly rampant, how so many people feel left out, bullied, side-tracked -- while at the same time feeling like they deserve better. These damaged people -- who usually made unobtrusive, normal-seeming neighbors until they went to school with a machine gun one day -- then seek out a way to put their feelings of alienation into some kind of context.

Too often they find it in the form of rightwing, Christian ideologies that systematically dehumanize whole ethnic groups and anybody who believes in an inclusive, multicultural, egalitarian society. And while everybody and their mother is, of course, denouncing the actions of this Norwegian sociopath just as they denounced Timothy McVeigh and Dylan Klebold before him, “mainstream” conservatives as well as ostensibly more progressive parties throughout Europe, North America and elsewhere talk openly about the “failure of multiculturalism” and of Europe’s grand Christian traditions.

The rise of the Right on both sides of the Atlantic has been fuelled by duplicitous politicians and corporate interests who have been appealing to the progressive nature of most people with talk of one big European family, while they implement policies which result in the further impoverishment of much of eastern Europe, continuing de-industrialization Europe east and west (and North America), combined with a flood of immigrants coming from places where job prospects are even more grim (such as eastern Europe, North Africa, Mexico, etc.) or from places that have been destroyed by European and North American foreign policy, such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

Then the political elite blames the socioeconomic situation they have created on their victims, talking about the failure of multiculturalism, urban crime, welfare cheats, lazy workers, corrupt unions, etc. And they find lots of ways of saying we were all better off when society was whiter and more moral.

Of course, the big news is that society was never more moral, only more divided and stratified, before unions and multiculturalism. And Europe has never been white nor Christian. Jews got there way before Christ did, and the pagans long predated the Jews. Muslims have been there since the days of Mohammed.

On the one hand I think it’s important to emphasize that this guy is an extreme sociopath, at least according to my definition of the word. But equally, I think it’s important to note that xenophobes who make all sorts of wild and inaccurate

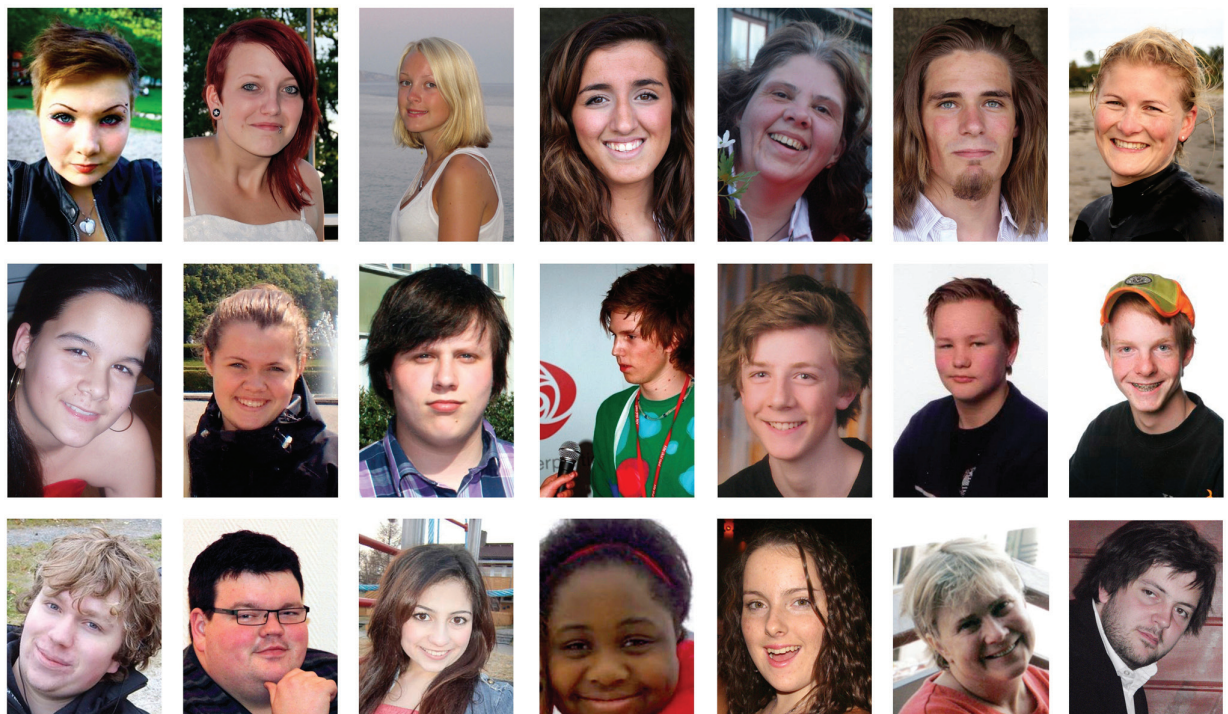
generalizations about Muslims and progressives are very easy to find throughout Europe, throughout society, from the streets to the halls of power in Berlin, Paris, and London as well as Stockholm, Copenhagen and Oslo, and this is not at all helpful in preventing the next massacre.

It is not just the extreme right that needs to understand that, far from representing more advanced civilizations than the societies from which many of the immigrants are coming, Europe is, and has long been, a troubled place. The right rejects multiculturalism and always has. Many progressive people in Europe and North America talk about “tolerance” and inclusiveness as if these are traditional European values. Of course, for many Europeans, they are.

But the history of Europeans actively rejecting an inclusive, open society is long and terrible in a way that is still unparalleled on our troubled planet. While a multiplicity of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups were living together comparatively peaceably for centuries of Ottoman rule, in Europe the inquisitors and crusaders were slaughtering their fellow Europeans for not ascribing to the right set of beliefs. While Jews were fleeing the pogroms in Europe, their counterparts throughout the Muslim world were prospering. And then decades later came the Nazi Holocaust, when a man very much like Anders Breivik was running an empire, with lots of little Anders Breiviks doing his bidding, using gas chambers along with their machine guns.

David Rovics is a musician for the revolution. He lives with his family in Portland, Oregon and tours regularly on four continents, playing for audiences large and small at cafes, pubs, universities, churches, union halls and protest rallies. His essays are published regularly on CounterPunch elsewhere, including his own site - DavidRovics.com.

Photo: REUTERS/Ho New - 21 of the 76 victims killed in the July 22 bomb attack in central Oslo and shooting rampage in Utoeya island. First row from left are: Silje Merete Fjellbu (17) from Tinn, Birgitte Smetbak (15) from Noetteroey, Margrethe Boeyum Kloeven (16) from Baerum, Bano Abobakar Rashid (18) from Nesodden, Hanne Fjalestad (43) from Lunner, Diderik Aamodt Olsen (19) from Nesodden and Kjersti Berg Sand (26) from Nord-Oda. Second row from left are: Sharidyn Meegan Ngahiwi Svebakk-Boehn, Guro Vartdal Haavoll (18) from Oersta, Syvert Knudsen (17) from Lyngdal, Simon Saeboe (18) from Salangen, Haakon Oedegaard (17) from Trondheim, Johannes Buoe (14) from Mandal and Eivind Hovden (15) from Tokke. Third row from left are: Sondre Furseth Dale (17) from Haugesund, Sverre Flaate Bjoerkavaag (28) from Sula, Gizem Dogan (17) from Trondheim, Dupe Ellen Awoyemi (15) from Drammen, Silje Stanneshagen (18) from Askoe, Tove Aashill Knutsen (56) from Oslo and Rolf Christopher Johansen Perreau (25) from Trondheim.



Fighting Gentrification in Toronto: The Anarchitecture of Adrian Blackwell

By Allan Antliff

In anarchist political activism, social structures are autonomous from, yet intimately related to, our agency. Society's betterment is conceived as a collective process of self-actualization wherein individual freedom and social freedom are contiguous: anarchism's potential is realized in the social trace of its own immanence. But that trace asserts itself in the face of formidable opposition. Given that existing societies are so antithetical to anarchist values, anarchism necessarily provokes antagonism, conflict, and challenge alongside pre-figurations of freedom as a sensuous reality. These are the politics of artist-architect Adrian Blackwell, who has been active for some time combating the forces of gentrification in Canada's largest city, Toronto. In the course of this struggle, Blackwell has developed the antagonistic aspect of anarchist aesthetics by creating zones of tension enacted in the spaces between art and architecture.

In the first instance, this has been his means of overcoming forces of alienation in the architectural profession. Blackwell argues that the production of architecture is "highly mediated [...] within the collaborative yet hierarchical structure of a firm" while art is "generated in a context that is proximate to the everyday lives of its producers" (Blackwell, 2005: 78). Architects build the environments we live in, but the creative freedom of the architect is systemically constrained. How, then, can one radicalize the social potential of architecture? Blackwell's solution has been to incorporate architectural concerns into art-making, prefiguring anarchic social relationships in the guise of art that takes aim at the popular culture of capitalist gentrification and the social relations marked out in the urban spaces it creates (ibid.).

What is the popular perception of gentrification in Canada and the United States? The term was first coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 to describe the transformation of a neighbourhood shaped by a less well-off class to suit another more affluent one. For Glass, gentrification was a predatory social process with a multitude of negative impacts, however, as the decades passed it began to lose its critical bite, at least in North America. Here, where the institution of private property is routinely treated as the structural foundation of civic development, gentrification was naturalized as a positive, politically neutral process of urban revitalization that removes "the stain of poverty" while physically improving the cityscape (Blackwell, 2006: 30). In his political study of the contemporary urban public sphere, American social theorist Jeff Ferrell has pinpointed the rhetorical features of civic uplift through gentrification as deployed by developers, civic officials, and law enforcement. Gentrification cleans up "'quality of life' crimes" and solves the unpleasantness of poverty and homelessness by forcing the poor to leave. Out of sight, out of mind, so to speak (Ferrell, 2001: 15).

In late September 1998, after considerable negotiations with city administrators and local businesses, Blackwell installed a portable toilet near the corner of Queen and Spadina in Toronto's downtown (Blackwell,

2004: 306). The installation was pitched as part of an off-site exhibition organized by an artist-run gallery and Blackwell committed himself to servicing and cleaning the toilet for a month. Prior to installation, he modified the toilet by replacing the door with a two-way mirror. The mirror allowed the casual round of toilet users to watch the street, creating



possibilities for play and voyeurism.

At the time the Conservative government of Ontario had passed a "Safe Streets Act" empowering police to criminalize the survival strategies of homeless people. Gentrification was intensifying under the auspices of Toronto's city hall, which was promoting condominium development in the downtown core. As part of the effort, Toronto police were given increased funding for overtime and a mandate to clear the homeless from public areas (ibid.). Government and private developers found common cause in the popularization of a familiar gentrification equation: poor people = danger. Blackwell installed his toilet adjacent to a busy corner where street people cleaned car windows for money. Local businesses had been agitating for the corner to be cleared, and one of their strategies was to deny access to washrooms.

This was an intervention on the side of the window cleaners, providing a much needed public service to those being discriminated against. In the process, systemic segregation along class lines and the imposition of proprietor rights on the public sphere was successfully disrupted. Use of the toilet also provided respite from intensified police surveillance mandated by the Ontario government and Toronto city council "in the name of the public good" (ibid., 307). In effect, every time a street person used the toilet the watched became the watcher, a reversal of perspective that went hand in hand with Blackwell's provocative push-back against social harassment at the behest of business interests.

In the late 1990s, Toronto's planning department announced a competition to design a new public square at the corner of Yonge and Dundas Streets in the heart of the downtown. Brown and Storey Architects invited Blackwell to help develop a proposal, but he pulled out once he realized their plans were at odds with his own. The firm went on to win a place in the competition, and eventually secured the commission, giving us the square as it exists today (Blackwell, 2008: 86). The square

was a classic exercise in gentrification, promoted as a festive, business-friendly space, tightly-managed and packaged for rental purposes. Accordingly, Brown and Storey designed a square that serves the needs of commerce. A prominent electronic billboard bombarded the public with advertizing and architectural features were introduced to channel traffic flow between shopping destinations. The plaza was conceived as a stage for corporate-backed promotional events, replete with water jets for crowd management.

Blackwell walked away from the privatization of Dundas Square, but he refused to abandon the public space being colonized. Instead, he created his own alternative design, which he presented at a public event celebrating the competition's winning entries. The proposal was inspired by the spaces of civic discourse in ancient Greece — the market place, called the agora, and the focused amphitheater (Blackwell, 2003b: 308).

It took the form of a spiraling platform that gently descends towards a large open area in the centre. A balcony and bleachers provide alternative ways to experience the space which can be entered from multiple directions. The aesthetics are porous, open to the whims of the public (Blackwell, 2008: 86). Following the privatizing logic of gentrification, the planning commission's square was intended to mirror the commercial vocabulary of its surroundings; and this is precisely what Blackwell rejected. In accord with the anarchist insight that diversity, disorder and unpredictability are inescapable facets of social freedom, his square is free of any ideological manipulation, notably the advertising tower that figured so prominently in the winning plan. Blackwell's proposal fostered antagonism between a space for discussion and debate and the commercialized environment surrounding it. The design welcomed demonstrations and other manifestations of political conflict because it refused to impose a hegemonic notion of community on civic life. Accommodating "the diversity and friction which democracy requires" the proposal encouraged "freedom of action" that exceeds any boundaries set down by civic or state authorities (Blackwell, 1998a). Anarchy was flagrantly and overtly celebrated. "Playing with fire, eating outside, telling a lie, kissing on concrete,

walking a line, fighting the power, loving a stranger" — in a civic space autonomous from regulation, the possibilities could and should be endless (Blackwell, 1998b). Blackwell exposed the Dundas Square competition as a gentrifying exercise intent on commercializing the public sphere and managing it.

Occasionally, life imitates art. In 2008, the city employee in charge of Dundas Square's development was appointed Toronto Chief Planner. Meeting with a newspaper reporter for a photo op, he was chased off his own square by an "events manager" who brought along a security guard. They were told that "doing anything on the square" required a permit. A pizza company was setting up to hand out free slices, so they had to move on. Civic rhetoric aside, the reporter concluded, "what we have [at Dundas and Yonge] is a private square run by a board of management that rents it for corporate events" (Anonymous, 2009).

In the wake of his Dundas Square intervention, Blackwell decided to distill his proposal's anarchic features in ideal form, as a sculpture designed for public use. Model for a Public Space was completed in 1999 and has been exhibited in a number of galleries and outdoor civic settings. The model is composed of concentric bleachers about twenty-five feet in diameter. The ring starts at ground level and rises to a height of seven feet before spiralling gradually downward into the centre. This sculpture was inspired by anarchist decision-making processes in which participants form a circle so as to engage with each other face to face. The model is designed to accommodate a larger group of people than a standard circle. Variations in elevation create conditions for playing with the dynamics of implied hierarchies that offset each other. Power relations are symbolically situated and made fluid in the process. Who is more commanding, a person closer to the centre or a person higher up on the periphery? (Blackwell, 2008: 87).

In 2000, in the midst of Toronto's development frenzy, Blackwell exhibited Model for a Public Space at the Lisgar Street location of Mercer Union, one of the city's oldest artist-run galleries (est., 1979). Buildings in the area were being converted at a rapid pace into condominiums and upscale locations for high tech companies.

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Adrian Blackwell's Anarchitecture continued fm pg 4

Around the corner from the gallery, real estate developers had set up show rooms and stage apartments to lure buyers. While Model for a Public Space was on exhibit, Blackwell organized several open forums in which local residents discussed the social problems arising from gentrification and the lack of affordable housing in the immediate neighbourhood (Osborne, 2000: 26-7). A social sculpture of antagonism and agitation pitted the civic freedoms of artists, wage earners, and people on welfare against capitalized urbanism for the affluent.

Blackwell himself was homeless when he installed Model for a Public Space. He had been living in a former factory located at 9 Hanna Avenue in which occupants built their own studio units, complete with plumbing and other amenities. A Fiber-Optics company had bought the building site and on March 31st, the occupants were given 30 days notice to get out.

9 Hanna was more than a home. The makeshift interior included an immense central area that had been used for a host of activist projects over the years, including banner-making. The studios housed many artists, and the creative work that had gone into them was extensive. "What I loved about 9 Hanna," Blackwell recalls, "is that you could make things in it. It had two features that made it ideal: affordable, well-lit [studio] units and large open spaces inside the building where it was possible to make a mess and build larger things. It was a functional utopian space" (2005: 88).¹ The building was political and it was social. It was functional and it was unique. It deserved to be commemorated.

With eviction pending, Blackwell documented thirteen artists' studios using a pinhole camera. Each photograph in the series, titled Evicted May 1st, 2000 9 Hanna, records the individualized features of these spaces. The units had been built and adapted to suit the needs of those who lived and worked in them. No studio was exactly the same as the next and they varied in size according to the amount of floor space occupied. Blackwell has argued such "ideal generic spaces" are antithetical to the money-making conceptions of condo developers, who destroy the possibility of "autonomous creative production" every time they shut down a low-rent building to make way for upscale lifestyle living (ibid., 88-9). His series reclaims the activism of these spaces, where modes of living were freely configured to serve the desires of the inhabitants. These open architectural creations, photographically aestheticized, project an anarchic oppositional power, a threat by example that could not be left alone, targeted and Evicted by the economics of capitalism. The radically reflexive art of Blackwell attacks, in the first instance, forces that undermine the possibility of a better, more humane world. His work configures anarchist aesthetics as an exercise in immanence by appealing to us as potential accomplices in the social tensions that anarchy in art cultivates through its refusal to closet itself within the confines of capitalism's cultural institutions. This aesthetic of tension is constantly searching for avenues that break out of alienation, transparencies that bridge the gap between artist and audience, ruptures that draw us into contested social ground, where we discover our own freedom.

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Footnotes

¹ He continues, "By contrast, the condominium loft is primarily concerned with consumption. It short-circuits all the productive possibilities embedded in the studio. For that reason I see the condo craze in Toronto and the gentrification of low rent studio buildings as an attack on the possibility of producing a world of autonomous creative producers."

Allan Antliff, Canada Research Chair, University of Victoria, is a member of the Victoria Anarchist Bookfair Collective and the Victoria Anarchist Reading Circle (VARC). He frequently hollers and hoots during Johnny Cash sing-a-longs at Big Bad Johns.

Imagination for the Revolution

by Serina Zapf

The loss of confidence in our own imaginations and creative powers is the greatest setback for revolution. When we resign ourselves to the misery of wage slavery, the life fed to us by elites, when we succumb to the status quo and forget that another world is possible, the oppressors are given a powerful tool in their arsenal of coercion . As anarchists we stand in resistance to the slavery of wage economy, the violence imposed by the state to keep us in our place, and the increasingly rapid destruction of our planet by consumerism. But what does all this mean? How do we resist and what do we expect to get out of this struggle?

When I chose not to vote, and shared my choice with family and friends, I was met with a sea of outrage and condemnations for my alleged "stupidity and irresponsibility." The reasons behind my choice aside, many of my loved ones wanted to know exactly what it was I proposed they do instead. They could agree that the state imposed a society of alienation and violence upon the majority of beings, "but," they argued, "this is the way it is and what exactly do you suggest we do about it? More importantly, what happens once the state falls?"

Well, I thought about this, and with growing distress realised I had no answer. "I call myself an anarchist," I probably thought, "so how can I have no answer to such integral questions?" Naturally, I pondered for a good while longer until at last it became clear: I had no answer for them! I mean, why was I being asked for some catch-all solution anyway? All these creative intelligent people are perfectly capable of imagining another world for themselves. This is the world I dream of as an anarchist. A world of freedom where we can all live our lives to the fullest extents of our imaginations. And indeed, my version of what this looks like is certainly very different than the wild imaginings of another. This is the beauty of it. Our courage to follow our dreams takes the power away from our oppressors, state and corporations alike. When we have confidence in the powers of our own creativity and the courage to take the necessary risks to live them, we become aware that we don't need the corporations, backed by their lackeys in the government, peddling their useless objects to us. We also learn to trust and respect our neighbours as we share our dreams with them. Anarchism is about respect for each person's autonomy, while recognizing the importance of community. It is the attitudes of my beloved detractors, their sense of powerlessness and inability to have confidence in their own imaginations that, simply put, gives the state all this f**king power in the first place.

So how do we get there, this imaginary world of possibility? I believe that we are already there, when we are striving each moment to realise life to its fullest and most free. We do not arrive at some grand moment where we all heave a giant sigh and the world is reborn. No, each moment each day we create revolution. Each moment we are actively creating this world for ourselves. We live the revolution when we choose to grow food with our neighbours, when we ride our bicycles to the park, when we share food from dumpsters, when we play music with our children, when we learn from one another through our stories and when we write passionate queer love letters in graffiti on barren walls. Each conscious act where we choose not to participate in this society based on fear and oppression, each moment we trust one another and act against the grain, we are the revolution and we live our dreams. Our imaginations are the limits, and let me tell you, you are a wonderfully imaginative being. So get on it! Don't wait around for someone else to give you all the answers. Start dreaming big and living it with each and every breath!

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Galluping Along

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lose seats – and which seats would those be? Presumably, additional resources and earnest intentions would be rushed into ridings where it was thought certain "predicted" results could be upended. Actually, many poll results were released publicly with the sole intention of influencing voters, either scaring or heartening the believers. Sometimes, even, in the world of polls, things are not as they seem: as one federal Progressive Conservative strategist once wrote, "When all else fails make it up... invent a poll."

There is smugness amongst pollsters when the results are, as is usually the case, proven accurate on election day. This, truly, is a mug's game, a deplorable arrogance. Though it might alternately dazzle, interest or disturb some of us, predicting short-term behaviour within a defined set of limited choices (voting for one of five parties, say) is nothing to crow about. Call it surveillance politics. It demonstrates little whatsoever about the complex future awaiting us. Forecasting an "orange crush" of NDP seats a few days before the election was merely a technical artefact: count something often enough and eventually you come close to getting it right. More to the point, no pollster saw it – let alone Jack Layton's recent stepping down – coming beforehand or understood the consequences. It reminds me of what Pierre Teilhard once wrote: "The worst failings of our minds is that we fail to see the really big problems simply because the forms in which they arise are right under our eyes."

There was a time – not too long ago, arguably only a couple of generations past – when polls did not have the form and frequency as they do now. They certainly weren't a pre-election, hour-by-hour scoreboard. Campaigns were played out in slow-motion, allowing time for closer encounters of the uncomfortable kind, for reflection, debate and rumination. Today, the plethora of polls creates a sense of leap-frogging over the event itself, the election merely a formality to confirm the good work of pollsters. Can it be so?

Curtis White, in The Middle Mind: Why Americans Don't Think for Themselves, lamented our culture's lack of self-reflection. "We are," he wrote, "free to say what we like in today's repressive cultural climate, as long as what we say doesn't matter." Which is what statistics do, in speaking to us – and for us. They're a safe bet, an easily digestible product of someone else's expertise – which can therefore be thrown around in a benign, noncommittal manner, like talking about the weather. But statistics, the twaddle of our age, are neither thought nor self-reflection, certainly not your own thought. A fast-emptying vessel, they fall well short of measured wisdom, and to the extent they have meaning at all, their shelf-life is brief.

If we let statistics define us and establish the trend lines – or, worse, to homogenize and standardize our thinking – then we have chosen to forfeit the game of living. This is not a prediction. It's a conclusion – a decidedly different thing. British philosopher John Gray saw this development as the irony of modern democracy: "when it becomes a mass philosophy, individualism almost invariably mutates into a new mode of conformism." Statistics do this to us. They've insinuated themselves into our consciousness and the broader social discourse. Being treated as a herd, we begin to believe we can live and think only as part of a herd, mere wildebeests of the Western world, galloping, weaving, dodging, led on, as one, across the electoral landscape.

So next time Mr. Gallup phones you, hang up. Better yet, make it up.

Brian Mason lives in James Bay.

9/11: “The Big Magic Trick” Ten Years Later

(First of Three Parts)

By Gordon Pollard

This article is dedicated to the memory of Hal Sisson, the distinguished lawyer, author and activist who was among the first to question “the official 9/11 fairy tale” and who inspired me and others to investigate the events of September 11th, 2001, to try to discover the truth about what really happened that day.

President Barack Obama’s bizarre claim on May 2nd that U.S. commandos had “killed” the long-dead Osama bin Laden in Pakistan is just the latest – and one of the most preposterous – in a long series of official lies about the so-called “terrorist attacks” of September 11th, 2001. As veteran U.S. intelligence analyst Dr. Steve Pieczenik wryly observed: “This was the first commando raid in history in which the commandos killed a guy who had already been dead for almost ten years.” Sadly, however, the mindless cheering triggered by Obama’s announcement and all the related lies and fabrications that have poured out of Cass Sunstein’s disinformation factory in the White House demonstrates once again that if you tell big enough lies and repeat them often enough, they will usually be believed.

As we approach the tenth anniversary of 9/11, the U.S. authorities will undoubtedly tell us more new lies and repeat a lot of old ones as they desperately try to keep the lid on Pandora’s Box and counter the growing worldwide awareness that the so-called “terrorist attacks” of September 11th, 2001, were a fraud. In Germany, for example, a recent opinion poll by the prestigious Emnid Institute showed 89.5 per cent of Germans no longer believe the official story that the “attacks” were carried out by Osama bin Laden and 19 Arab “hijackers.” And more than 1,400 professional architects and engineers from all over the world have now signed a petition saying they believe it was physically impossible for the twin towers to have come down in the way the authorities claim.

Indeed, after ten years there is now overwhelming evidence that the “terrorist attacks” on the twin towers in New York City were actually orchestrated by a small cabal at the pinnacle of U.S. power to provide a pretext for waging two phony wars, pillaging the energy resources of the Middle East and Central Asia, drastically curtailing civil liberties and diverting hundreds of billions of dollars of public money into the coffers of oil, arms and security companies.

Let me first confess that at the time of 9/11 I was taken in by the official lies and deceptions along with most people around the world. The events that day were so shocking and spectacular that it seemed to me the story the authorities were telling us must surely be at least basically true. Indeed, for five years thereafter I continued to accept the official version of 9/11 without seriously questioning it since I didn’t have the time, or initially even the inclination, to undertake the huge task of personally examining all of the massive amount of evidence available on 9/11.

But in 2006, after prodding from some friends, I began to carry out an intensive study into the 9/11 issue, and, on the basis of my five years of investigations, I now believe it is as clear and certain as anything can ever be in historical research that the events of September 11th, 2001, were masterminded, not from some cave in Afghanistan by Osama bin Laden, but from the inner sanctum of power in Washington, D.C., by a small cabal headed by then Vice-President Dick Cheney.

Like many other incidents that have occurred in history over the centuries, the 9/11 “attacks” have turned out to be what is known as a “false-flag” operation – that is, a clandestine operation which the leaders of one country carry out in such a way that they deny responsibility for their actions

and instead falsely accuse some of their foreign enemies of having perpetrated the incident, thereby providing a pretext to wage war against those enemies.

This has now become clear even to a number of retired U.S. military officers who have taken the time to study this issue and are brave enough to face the truth. For example, Lieutenant Colonel Guy Razer, who served for many years as a fighter-pilot and commanding officer in the U.S. Air Force, says: “After four years of research, I am 100 per cent convinced the 9/11 attacks were planned, organized and committed by treasonous perpetrators at the highest levels of our government.”

Veteran U.S. Air Force fighter-pilot Jeff Dahlstrom says: “This was definitely a false-flag operation. It was an attack on America by Americans – and was used to justify the Patriot Act, which took away half of the Bill of Rights.” Another retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, Robert Bowman, who served as Director of the “Star Wars” Defense Program under Presidents Ford and Carter, calls the official report of the 9/11 commission “a sham and a whitewash” and thinks the “prime suspect” for mastermind of 9/11 is Dick Cheney.

Retired U.S. Air Force Captain Russ Wittenberg, who was a fighter-pilot in Vietnam and flew military and commercial planes for more than 40 years, is even more blunt in dismissing the official version of 9/11: “The story our government has told us about 9/11 is total bullshit, plain and simple.”

Those views are shared by American theologian Dr. David Ray Griffin, who has long been considered one of America’s foremost theological scholars but who has become better known in recent years as perhaps the world’s leading independent expert on 9/11. Griffin, who has written nine meticulously documented books about 9/11, says “The truth about 9/11 is so shocking and has such horrifying implications that I can understand why so many people can’t bring themselves to face the reality – just as I couldn’t at first. But the evidence is indisputable. The truth is that 9/11 was an inside job, orchestrated by forces within our own government. It was a false-flag “attack,” with evidence planted to make it appear to have been planned and carried out by Arab Muslims... The Bush-Cheney administration had already decided, months before 9/11, to attack Afghanistan and Iraq. In planning and carrying out the 9/11 “attacks,” the perpetrators planted evidence to implicate Middle Eastern Muslims – evidence which, when examined, can easily be seen to have been fabricated... it is especially shocking that these “attacks” were orchestrated to pave the way for launching unprovoked wars on two countries that provided no threat – imminent or long-term – to the people of the United States.”

Although it took quite a long time for me and some others to understand what really happened on 9/11, one man realized right away that the story the authorities were telling us that day wasn’t true. He was William Rodriguez, who was on duty on 9/11 as chief custodian in the WTC North Tower when American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the building at 8:46 a.m.

A few seconds before the plane hit the tower, Rodriguez says he and 14 others who were with him heard and felt a large explosion below them in the sub-basement of the building, and they

later heard a series of smaller explosions along the walls far below the level where the plane struck. Many others also heard such explosions in all three of the buildings that collapsed. For example, one of Rodriguez’s co-workers in the North Tower, Teresa Veliz, says: “There were explosions going off everywhere. I was convinced there were bombs planted all over the place and someone was sitting at a control panel pushing detonator buttons.”

It should also be noted that 118 of the firefighters who fought the blazes that broke out in the three WTC buildings testified they heard what sounded to them like the kind of explosions that occur during controlled demolitions. For example, firefighter John Schroder, who arrived in the lobby of the North Tower shortly after the first plane struck, said: “Everything in the lobby was exploded, blown out. It wasn’t from the jet fuel – no way! It looked like a bomb went off in the lobby. There was no fire – it just looked like a bomb went off.”

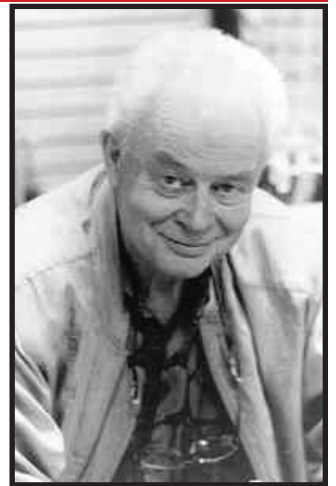
Firefighter Louie Cacchioli said: “In the lobby we saw elevator doors completely blown out and people being hit with debris – we all thought there were bombs set in the building.” Firefighter Dennis Tardio said he heard a series of explosions: “It was as if they had detonators and they planned to take out a building – boom, boom, boom.” Firefighter Kenneth Rogers said: “There were explosions floor after floor after floor... I figured it was a bomb because it looked like a synchronized deliberate kind of thing.” Firefighter Richard Banaciski, who was one of the first responders in the South Tower, said: “There were explosions like on television when they blow up buildings. These explosions seemed to be going all the way around the building like a belt.”

Outspoken firefighter Paul Isaac Jr. says most of the firemen and policemen who were on duty that day know the official story about 9/11 is a lie but they are afraid to say so publicly for fear of reprisals against themselves and their families. “There is no question,” Isaac says, “that explosives were used in the buildings. I know 9/11 was an inside job. The police know it and the firefighters know it too.”

Custodian William Rodriguez says he was shocked when he heard the authorities claim that fire and the impact of the planes had caused the buildings to collapse since it had been obvious to practically everyone in the buildings that they had actually been brought down by controlled demolition. On the morning of 9/11 Rodriguez bravely fought through billows of smoke and dust to lead hundreds of people out of the doomed North Tower – and for the past decade, perhaps even more bravely, he has fought through billows of official lies and deceptions, as well as constant threats and harassment, to insist that the authorities tell the truth about what happened on 9/11.

Ironically, Rodriguez had once worked as a magician’s assistant, so he was no stranger to the world of trickery and deception – and he drew on that experience to summarize what happened on 9/11. “It’s easy,” Rodriguez says, “to do misdirection – to make people look in one direction while you do the magic with the other hand. That’s the real story of 9/11. It was just a big magic trick. It was an illusion.”

After studying the 9/11 issue for five years, I fully agree with Rodriguez. In fact, we could



easily fill every page of every edition of *Victoria Street Newz* for the next year describing all of the “magic tricks” (i.e. the lies and deceptions) that the U.S. authorities used in planning, carrying out and covering up the “attacks” of 9/11. While that obviously won’t be possible, we will take a look at a dozen of the most significant of these lies and deceptions: four in this issue and four more in each of the October and November editions.

• ***The alleged ring-leader of the 9/11 “terrorists,” Mohamed Atta, wasn’t really an ascetic, fanatically devoted follower of Osama bin Laden as the authorities claimed – he was actually a very worldly, wild-living young fellow who had close ties, not to al Qaeda, but to the CIA-backed Pakistani intelligence agency, the ISI.***

This supposedly devout, Koran-obsessed warrior of Allah actually spent much of his time drinking alcohol, dabbling in cocaine and other drugs, eating pork and other foods shunned by fundamentalist Muslims and watching pornographic videos. He sometimes lived with prostitutes and frequently visited Las Vegas where he gambled, cavorted with lap dancers and often brought call girls to his room. So much for the official claim that Atta “hated America’s freedoms and was determined to strike a blow against U.S. decadence”!

For several months prior to 9/11, Atta was being closely monitored – and apparently also manipulated – by U.S. intelligence agents. He was also receiving money, not from al Qaeda, but from the U.S.-backed Pakistani intelligence agency, the ISI.

Indeed, even the FBI now acknowledges that a payment of \$100,000 was sent from the ISI to Atta’s Florida bank account on the personal orders of the head of the ISI, General Mahoud Ahmed, shortly before 9/11.

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And, by the strangest of “coincidences,” General Ahmed just happened to be in Washington, D.C., on September 11th, 2001, conferring with then CIA Director George Tenet and other senior U.S. intelligence officials.

It is now also clear that the “incriminating evidence” against Atta “found” at Logan Airport in Boston was planted, rather clumsily, by the authorities. Their story about how and where this “evidence” turned up changed many times in the days following 9/11, as David Ray Griffin explains in detail in his book [Cognitive Infiltration](#).

For more details also see:

- [Welcome to Terrorland: Mohamed Atta and the CIA Cover-up in Florida](#) by Daniel Hopsicker
- [9/11 Synthetic Terror: Made in the U.S.A.](#) by Webster G. Tarpley

- ***The widely-publicized photo collage of the 19 alleged hijackers which the authorities produced so remarkably quickly after the “attacks” is a complete fabrication – several of these “suicide hijackers” turned up very much alive after 9/11, and none of the names of the “hijackers” appeared on the original flight manifests released by American Airlines and United Airlines immediately after the “attacks.”***

The authorities moved with dazzling speed to produce the names and photos of the 19 alleged hijackers. We were immediately told, in effect, that these were the men who had committed the crime, and we should all blindly believe that claim and not ask any embarrassing questions.

In fact, however, no remains or other physical evidence of the “hijackers” was ever found at the crash sites – except for five identification documents and one red bandana which, we are told, somehow miraculously survived three of the plane crashes and were found in remarkably good condition.

According to the official story, the passport of alleged hijacker Satam al Suqami magically survived the fiery crash of Flight 11 into the North Tower and was found in the rubble in near-perfect condition. And in Pennsylvania at the site where Flight 93 was said to have spiralled into the ground, there was, astonishingly, no wreckage of the plane or bodies of any of the people on board – just the “magic passport” of alleged hijacker Ziad Jarrah and a red bandana supposedly belonging to one of the “hijackers.”

An even greater “miracle” – or actually three “miracles” – occurred in Washington, D.C., where Flight 77 allegedly struck the Pentagon. Again there was no plane wreckage or bodies of any of those on board – the only items that somehow magically survived were three identification cards belonging to alleged hijackers Majed Moqed, Nawaf al Hamzi and Salem al Hamzi.

Moreover, in the days following 9/11, several of the “suicide hijackers” turned up very much alive. For example, it turned out that “hijacker” Abdul Aziz al Omari had been working at his office at Saudi Telecom in Riyadh on 9/11. Another “hijacker,” a young pilot for Saudi Airlines named Saeed al Ghamdi, was in Tunisia attending a flight training course when some friends came rushing up to him a couple of days after 9/11 with a newspaper showing his picture on the front page and describing him as “one of the 9/11 suicide pilots.”

Alleged hijacker Salem al Hamzi was found

working at a petrochemical plant in Yanbou, Saudi Arabia. And another “hijacker,” Waleed al Shehri, who was working as a pilot in Morocco at the time of 9/11, saw his picture in a Casablanca newspaper and notified the authorities that he was still alive.

Indeed, nine days after 9/11, Saudi Arabia’s Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal met at the White House with President George Bush and after that meeting Al-Faisal told reporters: “It has been proved that at least five of the men on the FBI list had nothing to do with what happened on 9/11.”

All of the still-alive “hijackers” offered to appear before the official 9/11 commission and to submit to any tests or investigations required to prove their identity. But the commission and other U.S. officials simply ignored them, and to this day the American authorities continue to stonewall and use the clearly phony 19-photo collage of the “hijackers.”

It should also be noted that none of the names of the 19 alleged “hijackers” appeared on the original passenger lists for the four “hijacked” flights, which were released by American Airlines and United Airlines immediately after 9/11, even though all of them had supposedly purchased tickets in advance. It was only after this rather embarrassing discrepancy was reported on CNN and some other news outlets that the authorities issued revised versions of the passenger lists on which the names of all the “hijackers” now magically appeared.

Moreover, if hijackers had really broken into the cockpits of the planes on 9/11, surely the pilots would have followed standard procedure and “squawked” the universal hijack code (7500) on their transponders, an act that takes only a couple of seconds. But, amazingly, that was not done by even one of the eight pilots on the four “hijacked” planes.

For more details see:

- “The Patsies: The 19 Alleged 9/11 Hijackers” in [Global Outlook](#) (Issue 11), 2006
- [The New Pearl Harbor Revisited](#) by David Ray Griffin
- [The Hidden History of 9-11-2001](#) by Paul Zarembka

- ***The real reason why the “hijacked” planes were not intercepted by air force fighter-jets – like all 67 of the planes that had veered off course in U.S. airspace in the eight months prior to 9/11 were intercepted – was not because the air force was caught off guard on 9/11 but because it had been given a stand-down order by Vice-President Dick Cheney.***

In their “explanation” for why the planes weren’t intercepted, the authorities tried to muddle the fuzzification, as Allan Fotheringham used to say, by producing three mutually contradictory versions of the timelines for the flights of the “hijacked” planes. This is eerily reminiscent of what happened after President John Kennedy was assassinated on November 22nd, 1963, when the authorities produced three contradictory versions of the Dallas Police radio log for that day. It’s déjà fraud all over again, so to speak!

In any case, if we cut through all the flim-flam and disinformation, there is clear evidence that the U.S. authorities learned of the “hijackings” of: Flight 11 at least 31 minutes before it struck the North Tower, Flight 175 at least 20 minutes before it hit the South Tower, Flight 77 at least 38 minutes before it allegedly hit the Pentagon, and Flight 93 at least 31 minutes before it crashed in Pennsylvania.

Under standard U.S. air defense procedure, any planes veering off course without explanation are routinely intercepted within about 10 minutes. On 9/11 there was clearly ample time for the 14 jet-fighters available at four bases in the Northeast Air Defense Sector to have intercepted all of the “hijacked” planes.

It is especially mind-boggling that no fighter-jets were deployed from Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, the main military base protecting the U.S. capital, until 10:42 a.m. – more than an hour after the Pentagon was struck. As former British cabinet minister Michael Meacher says: “There is simply no rational way to explain why planes weren’t deployed immediately from Andrews, which is just 11 miles from the Pentagon and which had always said it maintained scramble-ready fighter-jets around the clock.”

So why didn’t the air force follow normal procedure on 9/11 and intercept the “hijacked” planes? Quite simply because it had been ordered not to do so. According to Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, who was in the basement bunker of the White House where Dick Cheney was directing operations that morning, an alarmed-looking young officer came into the room three times reporting on the movements of the “hijacked” Flight 77. The third time the young man asked Cheney, “Do the orders still stand?” and Cheney reportedly snapped, “Of course the orders still stand. Have you heard anything to the contrary?” Not surprisingly, there is no mention of Mineta’s stunning testimony in the official 9/11 report.

But veteran CIA operative Ray McGovern says he and other intelligence experts who have studied this issue believe that the Mineta testimony, along with other factors, clearly indicates Cheney had issued a stand-down order.

There were also a number of reports across the U.S. on 9/11 that a stand-down order had been given. For example, at Los Angeles International Airport, security expert Charles Lewis said he and others monitoring FAA and NORAD communications were shocked when they learned that “a stand-down order had come from the highest level of the White House.” Lewis says that in a private conversation he had in 2006 with La Ponda Fitchpatrick, head of security operations at the Los Angeles airport on 9/11, “she told me LAX security was well aware that 9/11 was an inside job.”

For more details see:

- [The Terror Timeline: Year by Year, Day by Day, Minute by Minute](#) by Paul Thompson
- [Cognitive Infiltration](#) by David Ray Griffin
- [Crossing the Rubicon](#) by Michael C. Ruppert
- [Towers of Deception](#) by Barrie Zwicker
- [American Conspiracies](#) by Jesse Ventura and Dick Russell

- ***It should now be obvious to “anyone with two eyes and a brain” that all three of the buildings that collapsed in New York City on 9/11 (WTC 1, WTC 2 and WTC 7) were brought down by controlled demolition using high-temperature cutter-charge explosives – not by hydrocarbon fires and the impact of the “attacking” planes.***

There is simply no way the 656 huge solid-steel beams supporting the three buildings (287 in each of the twin towers and 82 in Building 7) could have been melted and cut by fires fed by jet fuel, which burns at a maximum temperature of 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit. Steel requires a

temperature of at least 2,800 degrees Fahrenheit to even begin melting, and the pools of molten steel that flowed like lava in the debris of the fallen buildings for weeks after 9/11 couldn’t have been produced without a temperature of at least 3,500 degrees Fahrenheit.

In addition, some melted molybdenum was found in the rubble at Ground Zero – and that substance requires a temperature of at least 4,753 degrees Fahrenheit to melt. And there were also pieces of steel that appeared to have been partly evaporated – a process that would have required a temperature of at least 5,182 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures of this kind couldn’t possibly have been generated by jet fuel.

Moreover, all three of the buildings collapsed in just a few seconds at near free-fall speed – and this couldn’t have happened without the use of pre-positioned cutter charge explosives, according to physicist Dr. Steven E. Jones, who has carried out by far the most detailed independent study of the WTC collapses, using elaborate scale-models of the buildings. After several years of tests and analysis, Jones said: “There is only one honest conclusion that can be made: the buildings couldn’t have collapsed the way the authorities claimed without violating several of the basic laws of physics.” Jones had been a long-time physics professor at Brigham Young University in Utah but was fired when he refused to either suppress his 9/11 research or lie about it.

Internationally renowned architect and New York City planner David A. Johnson, who has also carefully studied the WTC collapses, says: “I am very familiar with these buildings and their design, and I know they couldn’t possibly have come down the way they did without using explosives and severing the core columns at the base.”

Another prominent expert on the WTC collapses, San Francisco architect Richard Gage, studied all of the fires that have broken out in steel-framed high-rise buildings around the world and concluded: “In more than 100 steel framed high-rise fires which have occurred before and after 9/11 (most of them very hot, very large and very long-lasting), not one of these buildings has collapsed, ever.”

Gage believes it was physically impossible for the WTC buildings to have come down the way they did without the use of high-powered explosives and he has circulated a petition calling for a new, honest investigation into why the structures collapsed. As we noted earlier, that petition has now been signed by more than 1,400 professional engineers and architects from all over the world.

It should also be noted that several huge pieces of steel from the towers – some weighing as much as 50 tons – were propelled laterally more than 500 feet, which couldn’t possibly have happened in a gravity-driven collapse. Indeed, Dwain Deets, a former director of research engineering at NASA, says: “The fact that these massive chunks of steel were hurled horizontally for such distances leaves no doubt in my mind that explosives were involved.”

When the buildings collapsed, there were also huge pyroclastic clouds of pulverized concrete, which drifted across much of Lower Manhattan – the type of clouds often produced by controlled demolitions, but not by fires or gravity-driven building collapses.

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Moreover, the 9/11 commission blatantly lied when it said there was a hollow shaft at the core of each of the twin towers. Actually there were 47 gigantic solid-steel girders at the core of each tower, and after the towers fell on 9/11 most of these girders were found in quite neatly cut 30-foot-long pieces – just the right size to be loaded on to flatbed trucks and quickly whisked away from the site (more than 40 truckloads were removed in the first 24 hours). Such precision “slicing” of steel is quite common in carefully planned demolitions but never occurs in random hydrocarbon fires.

One man who became fascinated by all the controversy about the WTC building collapses was the respected Danish scientist Dr. Niels Harrit, who taught chemistry at the University of Copenhagen for 34 years and has published more than 60 articles in major scientific journals.

Harrit and eight colleagues decided to get to the bottom of the matter by carrying out an intensive independent study. As part of their investigations, these scientists examined samples of dust from the WTC rubble and were astonished to find millions of microscopic chips of nanothermite – an ultra-high-tech incendiary explosive which is capable of slicing through steel beams.

At the end of their two-year study, Harrit concluded: “The evidence couldn’t be more clear. Anyone with two eyes and a brain can see that all three of the WTC buildings were brought down by controlled demolition involving extraordinarily high temperatures and enormous explosive force – not by random hydrocarbon fires and the relatively minor impact of the planes.”

As Harrit notes, even though the images of the jetliners crashing into the towers were so dramatic, the impact of the planes would actually have caused only relatively minor structural damage. Indeed, the towers had been specifically designed to withstand multiple impacts from a four-engine jetliner travelling at up to 600 miles per hour. On 9/11 the north tower was hit by a two-engine jet travelling at 440 miles per hour and the south tower by a two-engine jet travelling at 540 miles per hour.

Hyman Brown, the construction manager at the time the twin towers were built, said: “The buildings were over-designed to withstand almost anything, including hurricanes, bombings and an airplane hitting them.” Sadly, the WTC’s construction manager at the time of 9/11, Frank DeMartini, perished in the “attack” on the north tower. But, in what turned out to be a remarkably prescient interview in January, 2001, he said: “I believe the towers could probably sustain multiple impacts from jetliners because their structure is like the mosquito netting on a screen door – the jet plane would be just like a pencil puncturing that screen netting.”

And one last point about the buildings: some might wonder how agents of the Cheney-led cabal could have gained access to the WTC buildings to plant the cutter-charge explosives. Actually, however, that wasn’t much of a problem since the company in charge of security at the WTC complex, Securacom, was headed by none other than George W. Bush’s brother Marvin and cousin Wirt Walker III.

For more details see:

- www.AE911Truth.org
- *9/11: Blueprint for Truth – The Architecture of Destruction* (DVD) by Richard Gage
- *9/11 Revisited: Scientific and Ethical Questions* (DVD) by Steven E. Jones
- “Active Thermite Material Observed in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Centre Catastrophe” in *Open Chemical Physics Journal* (vol. 2), 2009
- “The Impossible Free-Fall Collapses of the Three WTC Towers” by Tony Bird in *Global Outlook* (Issue 13), 2009
- *Waking Up From Our Nightmare: The 9/11/01 Crimes in New York City* by Don Paul and Jim Hoffman

Next month, when we continue our look at the sordid but fascinating story of 9/11, we will see that:

- The story we were told about “heroic passengers” overpowering four “hijackers” aboard United Airlines Flight 93 and sending the plane plummeting to the ground was pure fiction – actually the plane was shot down by two F-16 fighter jets dispatched from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia on the orders of Vice-President Dick Cheney, and the plane’s debris was scattered over 13 square kilometres of the Pennsylvania countryside.
- WTC 7, the building that mysteriously collapsed even though it wasn’t hit by any plane, was brought down by controlled demolition on the afternoon of 9/11 because the “emergency command centre” on its 23rd floor had been used to guide the “attacking planes” into the twin towers, and the authorities wanted to make sure any incriminating evidence would be destroyed.
- The Pentagon wasn’t really hit by a jetliner on 9/11 but by a small missile, and great care was taken to minimize damage and casualties – and also to make sure that records related to one of the biggest military spending scandals in American history would be destroyed in the “attack.”



- The so-called “smoking-gun videotape” purporting to show Osama bin Laden chortling about the 9/11 “attacks” has been exposed as a fake – and, contrary to all the ridiculous hype and hoopla about U.S. commandos supposedly killing bin Laden in Pakistan, he actually died quietly and undramatically in the mountains of southern Afghanistan in mid-December, 2001, when he lost the long fight he had been waging with chronic kidney disease.

Gordon Pollard, who is a native of Victoria, has a MA in History from Columbia University in New York City and a BA in History and English from the University of Victoria. After working for 10 years as a journalist in B.C., Alberta, and Ontario, Gordon spent 20 years teaching English and History in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka.

Cuba Continues to Prioritize Health & Education

by Gerry Bill

Cuba never ceases to amaze me. Here we are in the throes of an international economic crisis affecting every country in the world. Yet, in the midst of that crisis, the Cubans manage to maintain and practice the socialist values that have been at the core of Cuban society for the last 52 years. How do they do that?

It isn’t that Cuba is unaffected by the international economic collapse. The price of some of Cuba’s major export commodities, such as nickel, have dropped precipitously. Meanwhile, the prices of some of the things that Cuba must import have been going up. Perhaps worst of all, tourism, a major source of revenue for the island nation, is down because fewer people have the money to travel. All of those conditions are of course worsened by the immoral and illegal US blockade of our southern neighbor—a policy that has effectively kept the island in a state of siege for the last 50 years.

I have just returned from a ten-day visit to the island—my sixth in recent years—and, as always, I was inspired by the magnificent achievements of the Cuban people despite the constant persecution by the US government. Both the Cuban government, and more importantly, the Cuban people, are thoroughly committed to preserving the major achievements of the revolution, and to doing so regardless of what is happening in the international economy. Cuba will find its own way through the current economic chaos.

Cuban Priorities in Hard Economic Times

Yes, there is an economic crisis in Cuba these days just as in many other places around the globe. The difference is in the choices Cuba makes as it adapts to the changing economic circumstances brought on by the crisis. It is a matter of priorities. When Cuba prioritizes its budget it puts the health and educational needs of its people first.

When compared to other nations, Cuba devotes a rather large share of its national budget to education and health care for its people. The results of that decision are quite visible throughout the island. Cuba is a highly literate, highly educated society. Unlike my experience in many other countries around the globe, in Cuba I have never met an illiterate person. UNESCO has certified Cuba to be essentially free of

illiteracy, with a literacy rate of 99.8%, the highest of any Latin American country.

Not only are Cubans literate, the level of education is quite high. Education is free from preschool through graduate school, and an amazingly high percentage of Cubans have graduate degrees. You run into them all the time when traveling around the island. For example, over half of Cuba’s ordinary school teachers have masters degrees. The Cubans are a well-educated people, and they are proud of it.

Health Care & Medical Education in Cuba

The crowning achievement of the Cuban educational system is in medicine. Cuba has 23 medical schools for training its doctors. It trains them first in family practice, a mandatory specialization for all doctors, and then offers training in a wide variety of other specialties. The best known of the medical schools, internationally, is the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana (ELAM). ELAM is now training students from over 100 countries, all completely free of charge.

Yes, you read that right—Cuba is training students from over 100 countries to become doctors, all paid for by the Cuban government. You might ask, “How does a poor country with only 11 million inhabitants afford to provide free medical education for so many people from foreign lands and still have money left to train its own doctors?”

The answer lies in Cuba’s priorities and commitments. Along with education, health care is a top priority in Cuban society. They have raised the general level of health of the Cuban people dramatically since the revolution, giving Cuba some of the best health statistics in Latin America, and in many cases surpassing the health statistics in the US and Canada (infant mortality rates, vaccination rates, number of doctors per person, etc.).

Furthermore, the health benefits of living in Cuba are not really dependent on one’s income level. For example, in stark contrast to most countries in the world, infant mortality rates in Cuba do not vary according to the income level of the parents. Socialism seems to create an equality of outcome that just cannot be duplicated in capitalist countries.

continued on page 9 ...



Cuba's Health and Education Priorities continued from page 8....

Cuba has the knowhow to keep its own people healthy. It also has a culture that emphasizes generosity, which means they want to share their medical knowhow with the rest of the world, particularly with poor, third-world countries. Since the triumph of the revolution in 1959 Cuba has sent over 500,000 health professionals overseas to help meet the unmet medical needs of millions of people around the world. Currently Cuba has 30,000 medical personnel abroad in places like Haiti, Africa, and Latin America serving otherwise underserved populations. Remember, this is all coming from a society of only 11 million people.

Again you might ask, how can they possibly afford it? Well, they use what resources they have to make it happen. A big share of the national budget goes to health care and education because that is what is important to the Cubans.

Cuban Priorities vs. US Priorities

It seems that my own country, which is sometimes referred to as the richest country in the world, cannot afford the things that a poor country like Cuba can afford. Why is that? Well, to start with, the US spends over 50% of its discretionary budget on the military. With that as a starting point, there is no way the US can devote what is needed to provide adequately for the nation's health and education. As President Eisenhower rightly stated nearly 60 years ago, every dollar spent on the military represents a theft from the resources needed for society to look after the health and educational needs of its own people.

Stated another way, it is a matter of priorities. In Cuba, 69% of the budget is devoted to human needs: health, education, culture, sports, social security and social assistance. Unfortunately, in the US, the needs of the people are not the first priority. Try to imagine what the US would look like if we spent 50% of our budget on education and health instead of on warfare. It boggles the mind.

Arts Education in Cuba

Look at what is happening in the US during these times of so-called austerity budgets. Education and health care are facing large cuts. Consider what has happened to arts education in our public schools. When I went to school in the 1950s, classes in music and the arts were not only available in the public schools, but in many cases they were required subjects. The goal was not to make artists or musicians of all of us, but rather to give us the background to be able to recognize and appreciate good art and good music. Much of that has now gone by the wayside. It seems that when budgets are tight, education in the arts is the first thing to go.

Not so in Cuba. The Cubans place a high value on art and music education, and education in those subjects is given a prominent place in the schools. The results in society are pretty visible—the artistic and musical communities in Cuba are thriving, and Cuban citizens have become discerning consumers of those arts.

Again, it is worth asking, how can the poor Cubans afford to include the arts in their curriculum, whereas we in the US cannot find the resources to do it? The answer, once more, is priorities. In the US, military spending takes priority over spending on education, including arts education.

Science Education & Medical Research

Another priority in the Cuban educational system is science education. The sciences are given strong emphasis in Cuban schools, and a relatively high percentage of university graduates in Cuba get their degrees in the sciences. Somehow, this tiny, impoverished and besieged nation turns out significant numbers of world-class scientists.

Nowhere is this more evident than in medical research. During my trip to Cuba in July our group visited the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in Havana. It is one of several such research centers operating in Cuba. The discoveries and resulting medicines that have come out of these research centers are becoming well known in medical communities around the world—except, of course, in the US, where there is an effective information blackout of any good news coming out of Cuba.

Here are a few examples. Cuba has developed a highly effective therapeutic hepatitis B vaccine that has the potential to completely wipe out the disease. Indeed, Cuba is on track to be the first country in the world to completely eliminate hepatitis B from its territory. Currently there are only 11 active cases in the country, and by 2020 they expect there to be zero cases. Cuba is also working on a therapeutic hepatitis C vaccine that is expected to come on line in about five years, expected to be the first such vaccine in the world.

Cuba has developed a highly effective treatment for the foot ulcers that occur among diabetics. The new treatment makes it possible to avoid the amputations that were so common in the past. Cuba is expecting to fully eliminate therapeutic amputations among its diabetics through the use of this new medication. The medication will be exported to other countries to reduce or eliminate the amputations in those countries as well, but the US will miss out on that advance. Why? Because the US blockade prohibits importing things made in Cuba, even if those things are imported through a third country. This is one of the ways

that the US blockade backfires and hurts the US just as much as it hurts the Cubans. What a stupid policy—aren't we just shooting ourselves in that not-yet amputated foot?

The Cuban medical research centers are working on vaccines for diseases that do not even exist in Cuba. Cuba is a tropical country, but it is completely free of tropical diseases. Despite not having a domestic need, the Cubans care about their neighbors and about other poor countries plagued by the diseases not found at home. Therefore, they are working on a vaccine for things like dengue fever and cholera. Those are the sorts of vaccines not likely to be developed in capitalist societies because there is not much money to be made in preventing those diseases. In fact, there is more money to be made in treating those diseases than in preventing them.

For the Cubans, however, it is not primarily about money—it is about reducing human suffering. I specifically asked the researchers if the point of developing these vaccines was to bring money into Cuba by selling the product to other countries. They said not really. The vaccines will be sold to countries that can afford to pay for them, if those countries have the need for them. But for the really poor countries, really need the vaccines the most, the vaccines will be provided to them by Cuba at little or no charge. That is the socialist way—from each according to his or her ability to pay, to each according to his or her need. Cuba is not really pursuing a capitalist path as it develops these new medicines. If it brings money into Cuba, fine; if not, Cuba will still have been of service to people in need.

Putting the Needs of People First

The pattern in all of the above is pretty clear. A capitalist economy is driven by the need to protect corporate profits. In Cuban-style socialism, that is not the driving force. Instead, the general welfare of the entire population is the driving force. Once that priority is established, ways are found to make it happen.

Cuba is not a perfect society. They face some serious economic problems. The standard of living there is low by US standards, if measured by the production and consumption of consumer goods. Because of the tourist trade, some inequalities in income have crept into the society that are much greater than the Cubans would like to see.

The Cubans are working on these issues, and they will find uniquely Cuban solutions to their economic woes. But what they won't do is give up their core values. They are quite proud of their accomplishments in education and health care, and those are likely to be the last things Cubans will give up as they adapt to changing economic realities.

It is a matter of priorities. Cubans run their society as though the needs of people mattered above all else. That is why Cuba is such a threat to the US. It has made the socialist model work to the benefit of its people, and the US fears other countries might want to follow suit. Who knows, maybe someday even the US population will rise up and demand a system that provides parity with the Cubans in the realms of health care and education. Wow—that'll be the day! No wonder our leaders hate the Cubans so much—they make us look really bad because we don't seem able to do what they are doing.

Don't believe me? Go see for yourself. Join the Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba in July of 2012. Visit www.pastorsforpeace.org for more information.

Gerry Bill is Emeritus Professor of Sociology and American Studies at Fresno City College in California. He traveled to Cuba in July of this year with the 22nd Pastors for Peace aid caravan to Cuba. This was his sixth trip to Cuba with Pastors for Peace. He is one of the founders of the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, and is on the boards of the Fresno Free College Foundation, Peace Fresno, and the Central California Criminal Justice Committee.

Photos - top - An urn with the remains of Pastors for Peace leader Reverend Lucius Walker beside his portrait at a ceremony in Havana's Revolution Palace July 30, 2011. Pastors for Peace is a U.S.-based group opposed to the long-standing U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. They challenge the U.S. embargo regulations by not seeking a license from the Treasury Department. Walker died in the U.S. September 7, 2010 at the age of 80 and his remains will rest in Cuba following his wishes. REUTERS/Javier Galeano/Pool

- left - Caravanistas at the Latin American School of Medicine, formerly a naval base, near Havana.

Photo page 8: US graduates of ELAM with two caravanistas: Left to Right - Caravanista Gerry Bill; grad Sarah Chinelo Igbokwe from Nigeria, now of Texas; grad Keasha Shindana Guerrier of New York; caravanista and pediatrician Leni Reeves; grad Evangeline Oriaku of Atlanta.



No Security in Security

by Zac Braciszewicz

Every so often, I will be walking around, and I will hear it. Or I will pass someone, someone I usually don't recognize, and they will give me a certain look and say it: "Hey, security!" It's not aggressive, or hostile. It's like a way of knowing who is who out there, and where they stand in relation to each other. It seems like a way of creating a minimal human connection, outside of a context where my job was frequently to dehumanize people by herding them around. Maybe prison guards or cops get the same thing. I don't know. They don't know my name, they never do, except on one or two occasions where I was dealing with someone I knew from 'before.' Before they were on the streets, and before I was a security guard.

What I get now is, people who have to live that, day to day, they don't forget. They can't afford to. I've seen enough of the ugly side of street life to know that. They can't afford to forget who is who and what the power relationship is. Even though it has been years since I wore the uniform, even though I would never even consider putting it on again, even though I would honestly rather forget almost all of it, even though I still have stress and anxiety that can probably be traced back to that time in my life, in a lot of people's eyes, I will be 'security' for a long time.

These days, if people see me at all, it is for an entirely different reason. You see, I just completed a 21 day hunger strike to protest what I was calling economic injustice. Go ahead and check out 'the hunger strike for economic justice' on youtube, or facebook, and maybe you'll be surprised that you do indeed recognize me, minus about 25 pounds. Sometimes you have to do drastic things to get people's attention, to get them to think about uncomfortable things. I don't like giving up my privacy, I don't like starving myself, I don't like the nausea, spaciness, stomach pain, constant cravings for food, and food fantasies, but I couldn't hold the frustration in any longer. Two years into college, away from the street, and I still look at the way society is carved up, to make the rich, richer and the poor, poorer, and it still makes me sick, sad, and angry. Honestly, it always did, and probably always will.

The simplest way I can capture the truth of it is this: society doesn't come free. People don't just automatically get a sane, healthy, functional society growing out of the ground, like grass on the lawn. It takes investment, and a lot of those invested resources need to come from people who have a lot to begin with. Especially if those resources are drawn in the first place from the people, places, and things that comprise society. You take it out, you put it back in. But for whatever reason, the wealthy people and big businesses, and the governments they sponsor into office, don't think it works like that. They think that society is just there, will always be there, no matter what, and whatever they can use, they will. Anything they can't use, or can safely ignore, gets pushed off to the side. That's where security comes in. Our job is to make sure the stuff that gets pushed off to the side, stays there. No one has to look at it, clean it up, listen to it, or care about it. And when I say 'stuff,' I really mean 'people,' and the things they do, when they get pushed off to the side. I don't think I need to tell any of you what that entails. Security are the band aids on a failing society.

Most guards aren't terribly prone to reflection, at least in my experience. The harder and nastier the job, the less prone to reflection the guards have to be. I have met some smart, profoundly decent people in that line of work, but in every case, the more they think, the less they like it. Security guards deal in exactly the same way other humans deal; drugs, drinking, escapism, sometimes worse things. Sometimes they're just too damn young to think about it very much. Sometimes they like to hurt people. Sometimes they stop caring. Sometimes they were trained not to care, or not to show it, or to have contempt for those who lack self-control and 'discipline.' A lot of ex-military people get into security work. For me, it was reading, meditation, and simply having no other options I could see. I have never functioned very well in a standard workplace, and the one nice thing about security is, it's the job you can always, always, get, no matter what. You're a clinically depressed pot addict? You literally drool on the job? You fall asleep at your post? You're an un-diagnosed schizophrenic? Not much of a problem at all.

The point is this; the line isn't between guys like 'us' and guys like 'them.' That's something created to preserve a certain kind of order, that demands we degrade and dehumanize ourselves and other people, just to be allowed in the door. The guys paid to keep people down are the guys being kept down themselves, in other ways. The problem was never meant to be solved, it was meant to be contained. The jailers and the jailed, all in here, together. Humans are so much more than that. The world could be so much more than that, but if you're too scared and too desperate and too angry to think clearly, things just keep going the way they are, and if that goes on too long, there won't be a future for anyone. Sometimes you have to take a stand, even if it's just for your own peace of mind. At the very least you can have a clean conscience, as the world seemingly slides into the abyss. Maybe you can finally know that you really are a human being, no matter what anyone says, or what you've had to do. Who knows? Maybe you really can change something. It's both harder and easier than you realize.

Zac spent a decade dividing his time between security work, and studying martial arts, alternative medicine and Buddhism. For the past three years he's been a full time student of University level science and philosophy.



Books for Reading: Siddhartha

by Andrew Tate

Hi everyone. For September I have chosen to review a very spiritual, adventurous, thought-provoking and beautifully written novel that, since its re-publication in English in North America in the 1950s (the book was originally written in German), has become a classic in spiritual literature and one of the most popular Western novels set in India, especially during the 1960s hippie movement with its themes of a quest for spiritual enlightenment and a denial of the secular and materialistic world. It is entitled Siddhartha by Herman Hesse, (1951, English edition, New Directions Publishing Corporation, translated from German by Hilda Rosner, s.c., 122 pgs). Hesse (1877-1962) was a German-Swiss poet, novelist and painter who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1946. The original German version was published in 1922.

This is the story of Siddhartha (siddha "achieved" and artha "meaning" or "wealth" with the two words together meaning "one who has found meaning" or "one who has attained his or her goals"), a handsome and respected son of a Brahmin who lives with his father in ancient India. Everyone in the village expects Siddhartha to be a successful Brahmin like his father. Siddhartha enjoys an idyllic existence with his best friend Govinda, but secretly he is unhappy and discontent performing all the rituals of religion and doing what religion says should bring him happiness and peace. Nonetheless he feels something is missing. His father and the other elders have still not achieved total enlightenment and he feels that staying with them will not answer the questions he has regarding the nature of his existence. Siddhartha believes his father has already passed on all the wisdom their community has to offer, but he longs for something more.

One day, a group of wandering ascetics called Samans pass through town begging for food. They are starved and almost naked and believe enlightenment can be achieved through asceticism, a rejection/denial of one's self and physical desires. The path the Samans preach is quite different from the one Siddhartha has been taught and he believes it may provide some of the answers he is looking for. Therefore, he decides to follow his new path. Siddhartha's father does not want him to join the Samanas, but he cannot dissuade Siddhartha. Govinda wants to find a path to enlightenment too and he joins Siddhartha in his new life.

Siddhartha adjusts quickly to the ways of the Samanas because of the patience and discipline he learned in the Brahmin tradition. He successfully learns how to free himself from the traditional trappings of life, and so loses his desire for property, clothing, sexuality and all sustenance except what is required to live. His goal is to find enlightenment by eliminating his Self and he successfully renounces the pleasures of the world. Unfortunately, unlike his friend Govinda, Siddhartha, sunburned and half-starved and no longer resembling the handsome healthy boy he used to be, still feels dissatisfied and realizes that the path of self-denial has not led him to true spiritual enlightenment. At this time, Siddhartha, Govinda and the Samans have begun to hear about a new holy man named Gotama, the Buddha, who has attained total spiritual enlightenment called Nirvana. Govinda convinces his friend to leave the Samanas and seek out Gotama.

After they find Gotama's camp of followers and are taken in, Siddhartha is initially pleased with Gotama and his teachings. However, while Govinda decides to join Gotama and his followers, Siddhartha still has doubts and realizes that there is a contradiction in Gotama's teachings and concludes that Buddhism will not give him the answers he seeks being discontent with the disciple's role choosing to work out his own destiny and solve his own doubts. Sadly, he leaves his dear friend Govinda behind and begins a search for the meaning of life on his own no longer feeling the need for further religious instruction, meditation and spiritual quests and to instead learn from the pleasures of the body and the material world.

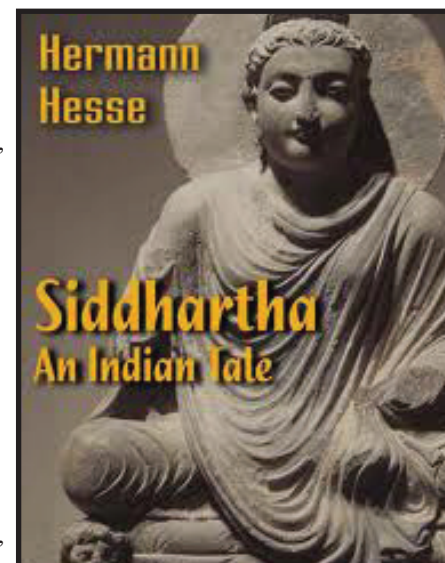
Along the way Siddhartha meets a friendly and wise ferryman (Vasudeva) while crossing a nameless river to a nameless city; has a love affair with beautiful, wealthy courtesan called Kamala who teaches him in the ways of love and encourages him to join the material world; struggles with the temptations of success and wealth (he becomes a wealthy merchant); experiences a rebirth/reawakening years later realizing that the more he obtains in the material world, the more miserable and empty he feels until one night he just simply walks away from Kamala and his business partner Kamaswami; experiences the heartache of losing his own spoiled and demanding son which he had with Kamala; and, several years later, finally achieving true wisdom, happiness and enlightenment by becoming a ferryman.

I won't divulge the final ending but I will just say that it was so beautiful, moving and poetic that I actually started weeping after I finished reading the novel. Also, the novel's central and most important "character" is the river itself which is very much responsible for Siddhartha's final and most profound reawakening/rebirth after leaving his previous life of wealth and success as a merchant where, feeling empty and suicidal, he wanders down to the river and falls into a deep sleep. It is the river with its many voices, beauty and simplicity which gives Siddhartha a new meaning and purpose in life.

I loved reading this book with its simple and beautiful prose and suggest reading it in a quiet, peaceful environment preferably late at night when the mind is relaxed and open. I also believe that one can find inner peace, wisdom and spiritual enlightenment by connecting, listening to, respecting and embracing nature. To me there is nothing more peaceful and relaxing than the sound of a waterfall; waves at a quiet, isolated beach; a powerful flowing river; birds singing; or the sound of the wind rustling through the trees. In regards to the GVPL, you can find 4 copies of the Hilda Rosner translation (hard or soft cover), which is the most popular, at the Central Saanich and Saanich Centennial branch under HES or H.

Until next time.

Andrew earned a B.A. in English, and is available to proofread, edit, and/or type and print out your essays. Email him at mrpianoman@shaw.ca for more info.



Conservative Omnibus Bill opens the door to unmitigated powers of police surveillance

by Kimberly Croswell

The Conservative's forthcoming Omnibus Bill, which Harper's majority government promised to ratify within 100 days of resuming Parliament, delivers a cascade of crime legislation with little to no public consultation or procedural debate. It covers a range of issues, promising stricter penalties against marijuana growing, a decrease in conditional house arrests in favour of increased time in jail, expanded anti-gang measures, and the reintroduction of contentious anti-terrorism laws that were struck down by parliament in 2007. Included within the Omnibus' list of measures, three particularly troubling proposals have begun receiving intense public scrutiny for their unprecedented and arguably unconstitutional infringements on privacy law. They are Bills C-50, Improving Access to Investigative Tools for Serious Crimes Act C-51, subtitled Investigative Powers for the 21st Century Act, and C-52, Investigating and Preventing Criminal Electronic Communications Act: bundled together, the three might as well be called the "Surveillance Powers Senator McCarthy Could Only Dream Of Act."

Beginning as legal devices intended to root out and stop the circulation of child pornography, Bills C-51 & 52 in particular far exceed their stated purpose: and one can't help but wonder why. At the heart of the debate are the "Lawful Access" measures designed to permit unlimited police surveillance of internet activities at their source, the Internet Service Provider (ISP), regardless of whether the police are conducting a formal investigation or not, and without judicial oversight. Critics are aghast at the bill's legalization of "warrantless wiretapping," and have admonished the government for undermining whatever moral high ground Canada may have to criticize the ISP oversight policies of authoritarian states such as China, and Iran. What this brand of argument overlooks is that the Harper government's aspiration to give the police the right to monitor all your personal information on the internet is, in fact, "upgrading" Canada's internet laws to suit current post-9/11 surveillance practices in the United States.

Since the beginning of the "War on Terror" the American population has been living the reality we are fighting against. The U.S. government has given special enforcement agencies extended legal powers to monitor citizens' internet activities for over a decade. Nothing has altered under Obama's "yes we can" rhetoric of change – in fact, the number of government-sanctioned wiretaps nearly doubled in 2010 alone. Back in Canada, the administrative apparatus – elected and bureaucratic – has been steadily tightening the U.S.-Canada surveillance knot, first with the Security and Prosperity Partnership, 2005-2009 (SPP) founded by Paul Martin, George Bush and Vicente Fox, and now with a new agreement on Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness (PSSEC), first quietly signed at a Washington conference on Feb 4, 2011. At the time the agreement received very little publicity in Canada, but since the May G8 Summit in France, where its implications began to be discussed, there has been growing alarm across the country. While the faces of the governing party (Liberal, Conservative) have varied over the last decade, the harmonization of Canadian and U.S. policies has continued apace, and now that he can guarantee majority government support, Harper, who has a long-standing militaristic pro-U.S. agenda, is readying to drive in the last spike: "God Bless Canada."

The Canadian government also faces tremendous pressure to legislate stricter security measures from the European Union (EU). Internet regulation is a huge issue for Europe and at the 2011 G8 Summit, President Sarkozy ensured cyber security would occupy top billing by inviting "big-player" CEOs from Facebook, Amazon, Google, and other Internet companies to participate in the first-ever "e-G8" forum. Sarkozy has a vested interest in this initiative, given the French government's failure to enforce its own censorship laws (offending French bloggers, for example, have routinely turned to offshore internet host providers to get their messages out). On paper, the "Lawful Access" legislation in the Omnibus Bill was written in part to comply with the "Convention on Cybercrime," a pact the

Canadian government signed with the EU in 2001. Thus, Bill C-51 begins by acknowledging its implementation will fulfill the letter of that Convention. But more is going on here. Given the excessive sweep of the proposed surveillance powers and their interlinking role, we may well be witnessing a push to establish State control of the Internet on a global scale, the better to prevent North African and Middle Eastern-style cyber-insurrections from breaking out in, say, parts of the EU or North America.

How did the specific measures in the Omnibus Bill come into being? Different subsections were inherited from the Paul Martin government and have been under development for the duration of the Conservative's minority rule. In short, Bills C-50, 51, and C-52 did not appear out of thin air, they have been bandied about in the halls and offices of government since 2005, when the Liberals first drafted them. Over the course of the next six years of minority government parliamentary discussion never happened. As Tim Lash, writing for *Voices-Voix.ca* (a Free Speech advocacy coalition), explains; "Its been legislatively delayed--gone away twice with prorogation, and again with the recent defeat of the government--only to be brought up again by the new majority for passage in a rush among other things." Internally, the governmental apparatus has ensured most of the Omnibus Bill has never seen committee or been debated by parliamentarians, a clear circumnavigation of democratic process. In response, Canada's Federal Privacy Commissioner, Jennifer Stoddart, backed by every Provincial Privacy Commissioner and Ombudsperson across the country, has voiced opposition to the "Investigative Powers for the 21st Century Act," but to no avail: the government appears determined to ram it through.

Here is his synopsis of how current laws will change--for the worse.

To recap, the proposed legislation gives police "Lawful Access"; the right to survey domestic internet traffic without a warrant, regardless of the existence or non-existence of an ongoing investigation. All that is required is the suspicion that a crime has occurred or will occur in the future. That said, warrants are still required for the police to use a telephone number recorder, conduct video surveillance, and enable tracking devices, unless they deem their need to do so an emergency. Currently, before police can obtain a surveillance warrant, they must justify their request based on degrees of "belief" or "suspicion" that a crime is being planned or carried out: the greater invasion of privacy they are requesting, the stricter the judicial oversight before they are granted a warrant. The Omnibus Bill will take away this oversight when it comes to the surveillance of on-line activities.

This Bill proposes to criminalize any links to websites containing "Hate Speech:" in effect, it's "guilt by association" legislation. The Bill will redefine online linking as a form of "publication" in and of itself, which, in tandem with an expanded list of "identifiable groups" that may be targeted by "Hate Speech," holds predictably problematic consequences. The present definition of "Hate Speech" in the Criminal Code designate an "identifiable group" as any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. The current Investigative Powers for the 21st Century Act revises the list to include "Nationality." With the addition of "Nationality" government persecution of civic freedoms in the name of combating "Hate" opens wide. The law provides unparalleled opportunities for censoring any criticism of governments the Canadian State finds favour with: one only need think of Israel's policies, which are supported by Harper. Will criticism of the Israel government, including internet links to such criticism, become "Hate Speech"? Contemplating the flexibility of application we need to keep in mind that in Canada the "identifiable group" clause has already been abused. In May, 2009, the Hamilton police,

claiming "visible minority" status for themselves, accused the Hamilton Anarchist Bookfair of fomenting "Hate Speech" against police officers and opened an "investigation" in a bid to harass the organizers.

Then there are the implications for using anonymous or false names online. Much confusion has emerged concerning this matter, including the erroneous belief that all forms of anonymous online interactions will be banned. That is not the case, but the Bill does criminalize those who use false names in the sending of harassing, threatening, indecent or false emails. In short, it provides a possible avenue to go after stalkers, cyber bullies, and abusers that could be expanded to encompass forms of political activism or social criticism such as satirical communiqués.

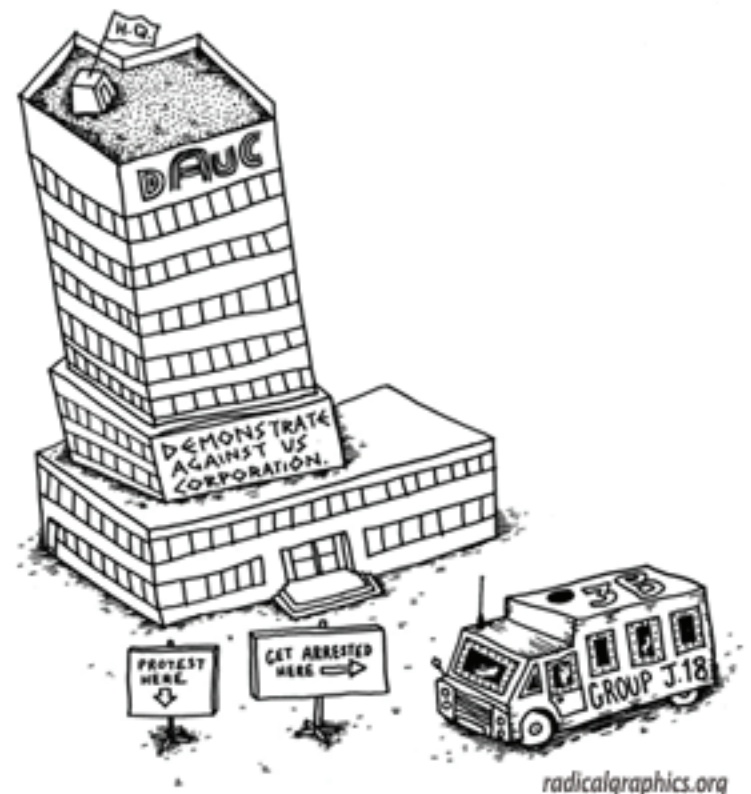
Mainstream newspapers have thus far concentrated their opposition to the Omnibus Bill by pointing to the costly upgrades Canadian ISPs will have to undergo to enable their transformation into surveillance State tools. Such critiques may be an avenue to attack this legislation from a free-market perspective, but they are ineffectual. Assistance undoubtedly will be provided to help integrate surveillance technology for newly "deputized" ISPs. And, from the Canadian IPS perspective, the new legislation will curb newcomers from competing with them. In fact, anticipating the Omnibus Bill, Canadian ISPs began writing into their service agreements the right to disclose customer information, should they be "required" to do so, as early as 2006. There is every reason to believe they are already "on-side."

Conclusion: Governance vs. Social Control

There is no such thing as free speech in a surveillance society: defending our right to exchange ideas online without government surveillance is no different from expecting secret ballots during elections. Ultimately, then, privacy and freedom of speech issues arising from the Omnibus Bill involve everyone, regardless of political stripe. On a grass-roots level, Openmedia.ca has started using networks established when pay-per-use billing was a hot topic to mobilize objections. As activists we also need to raise a storm of opposition against the Bill, but we also need to dissect and expose the implications of this Bill for using the internet and empower people with the knowledge (and the skills) to secure their online privacy.

Afterward: The promised "100 days after Parliament resumes" will set this Bill to pass by September 10th, 2011.

Kimberly Croswell extends her obsession with art and communications to her work with the Victoria Anarchist Bookfair Collective, the Victoria Anarchist Reading Circle (VARC) and assorted projects which will not be named.



There Is No Environment *by Comrade Black*

Maybe we've got to start at the start?

Maybe this began when the first womyn or man put their hand on the cave wall to leave a painted hand print?¹

The first act of humans imprinting their will upon mother nature?²

And maybe it continues when we said this beast and that beast is two.

And this tree plus that tree, plus that tree is 3.

And so began the process of turning nature into symbology?

And abstractions leading to technology, leading to abstractions, leading further, and further away from nature, until we don't even remember that we are animals...

Who once were feral and wild, but now through the process of domesticating plants and animals we have domesticated ourselves.³

Because domesticate and dominate share the same root.

Cause when we put up fences to keep the livestock in, we put a fence around ourselves too.⁴

And to keep ourselves out of the reach of her soily skin we put on a boot!

Cause we just can't handle the touch of the truth

that reminds us that We are animals too.

Because too much is at stake in accepting this truth.

I mean everything...

Every-Thing we know is at stake...

And this time it matters, for Earth's sake!

So we go on committed to our denial of who and what we are,

convinced that if we have come this far, there is no going back.

So we use science, art, and philosophy, to convince ourselves that reality, is abstract.

Because imagine what would be required if we were to allow ourselves to believe that the entire world is alive, every rock, lake, ocean, and blade of grass, every being a potential friend we can enter into a relationship with.

Imagine the politics of that. Imagine the consequences.

If we saw the world as alive could we allow anyone to destroy it?

I hate the word environment, because it is an abstraction that allows us a distance, a way to be separate from the world we live in.

Environment makes it sound like something else, somewhere else, something outside of us, not part of us

us as part of it.

There is no environment

Just living beings, plants, animals, and other friends

A community, a web, a complexity of life that never ends.

footnotes

¹ This is a reference to an article by John Zerzan called The Case Against Art where he presents the argument that the painted hand prints in caves of which are the first recorded forms of art, were an attempt to reproduce nature, but in this attempt we replaced the actual nature with a symbolic representation of it, that only serves to further distance ourselves from it.

² I once had the pleasure of seeing Waziyatawin speak on Global Collapse and how it relates to Indigenous struggles. She explained that the Dakota word for the land was Ina Maka which translates to mother Earth. She went on to explain how when one grows up in a Dakota speaking community, and every day hears the earth being referred to as their mother, grandmother, or great mother, that it builds a very different relationship, and that this can not be replicated by simply translating the words.

³ I think Walter Bond put it best "We are the original domesticated animal"

And probably my favorite thing I ever read on wikipedia was:

"Anthropological and historical evidence indicates that most prehistoric hunter-gatherer societies were generally relatively egalitarian, and that patriarchal social structures did not develop until many years after the end of the Pleistocene era, following social and technological innovations such as agriculture and domestication."

⁴ Agriculture was truly the beginning of private property. The etymology of the word garden refers to enclosure: it is from Middle English gardin, Anglo-French gardin, jardin, of Germanic origin; akin to Old High German gard, gart, an enclosure or compound, as in Stuttgart. When people began planting crops they all of a sudden had to defend that crop from other animal and human life that may wish to have the free meal, as well as bugs, and competing plant life. This also had another effect, in penning those people to that particular spot as stewards to protect their investments, and so we begin to very literally domesticate ourselves as we domesticate plants and animals.

Comrade Black is a Green-Anarchist, performance poet, and is active in community organizing. Comrade is influenced by anti-colonialism, feminism, DIY punk and has proudly lived a straightedge life of sobriety and defiance since 2002. Over the years Comrade has been a member of Camas Collective, the Victoria Anarchist Bookfair, and The Victoria Anarchist Reading Circle, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, Food Not Bombs, and setting up various events from DIY punk shows to workshops and gatherings. Artwork and poetry is from the zine Communiqué by Comrade Black, available at Camas Books.



How Green Was My Valley?

from Don Startin and Diane Culling



Don's Site C Dam Update:

This edition brings a double whammy to the long suffering Mackenzie watershed.

On August 2nd B.C.'s Environmental Assessment Department approved Hydro's project description for the dam. By the time you get your *Street Newz* details of public hearings may well have been announced in the media. We hope that as many readers as humanly possible will attend, and present their views to the panel. You can also submit your views in writing any time.

The other horrendous thing that has happened is that Talisman energy have been granted a water licence by the B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources to withdraw 8.1 acre feet of water per day from the Willesden Reservoir for the purpose of fracking for shale gas. This comes with an upper limit of two thousand nine hundred and eighteen acre feet a year. This is totally unacceptable. This water belongs in the Peace River for flushing purposes and in the Athabasca and Slave River Deltas to maintain levels already threatened by recurring climate change induced droughts, tar sands activity, and domestic demand. We can only hope the Athabasca Cree or the Alberta government take B.C. to Federal court to prevent this madness.

I was unable to get the reaction of the Athabasca Cree to all this before deadline.

Sure wish there was some outstanding good news to report!

Diane's report back from the Paddle for the Peace:

As it turned out, we had a great day. Approximately 200 people out for pancakes and music. We took the opportunity to take Scott Fraser, NDP Aboriginal Affairs Critic (Vancouver Island), and the reps from the Wilderness Committee (Vancouver and Victoria), Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Banff and Golden), Sierra Club (Victoria), and Wildsight (Kootenays) on a tour of the valley, including a property right above the proposed dam site. If we had been on the river as planned, we would not have been able to do that. It was very educational, to say the least.

I am including a photo of Larry and Lynda Petersen's farm (photo credit goes to Larry). They moved to the Peace Valley from Idaho in the early 1970s and had a commercial market garden. They averaged 2,000 tonnes of potatoes/year grown on just 100 acres.

Note that although the land was in hay at the time of the photo showing the flood level, those fields are capable of growing a wide variety of vegetable crops. I'll bet the people on the Horn of Africa would question flooding food growing land like this. As should any intelligent person.

For more information visit the Peace Valley Environment Association at peacevalley.ca.

What is Anarcho-Primitivism?

Anarcho-primitivism, or green anarchy, is mainly the idea that unless we get somehow primitive, there ain't going to be a future for life on this planet.

The disasters pile up, things get worse - and not just environmentally. How about the chronic massacre-type shootings in the US, for example. Parents killing their own children. Telling us something about how it's going, where we are headed.

The path of more and more industry on a global basis is one of suicide. The insane demand for more energy - to do more and more of what shouldn't have been undertaken in the first place!

One great source of alternative thinking is the lifeways of the original inhabitants here. Native people didn't destroy their world, weren't techno-mad folks divorced from our Mother Earth. We need a healing return, a different course from the one we're on. Everyone knows this, so it's time to get on with it.

John Zerzan will speak from this perspective at the Victoria Anarchist Book Fair, late afternoon September 10. All are welcome.

The Street Newz Vendor Team

Want to earn some \$\$ and promote independent media?

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Bill struggled with cerebral palsy all of his adult life. He joined the *Street Newz* team a couple of years ago and, though his time with us was short, he proved a friendly and dependable team player. While the winter weather was a bit much for him, in fairer seasons Bill travelled the city in his wheel chair, selling our little newspaper, careful not to infringe upon or disrupt the selling patterns of other vendors. He died quietly, in his sleep, a 77 year old man. Family and friends have organized a celebration of his life in West Vancouver. We'll take a quiet moment and give thanks for the opportunity to have known him, hoping he's taking his rest in a peaceful and joyous place.

Where Your \$\$\$\$\$ Goes



Vendors pay 50 cents for each *Street Newz*.

Whatever you give them is theirs to keep.



With gratitude to ViPirg for their \$650 donation towards this issue.

May money from the sale of this newspaper be used for peace, and pass through healing hands.

	June	July	August
Street Newz Revenue			
Paper Sales (from previous mth)	461.00	564.50	543.50
Donations	310.00	775.00	60.00
Gifts (incl in-kind)	200.00	40.00	40.00
Co-ordinator's Contribution	-35.14	-152.90	-77.52
Subscriptions	35.00	35.00	35.00
Direct Donations to Coordinator	50.00	50.00	50.00
Bread & Roses Donation to SNZ	800.00	800.00	800.00
Total Street Newz Revenue	1820.86	2111.60	1450.98
Street Newz Expenses			
Salaries	800.00	800.00	800.00
Paper & Printing Costs	358.40	374.08	392.00
Office expenses/website	0.00	0.00	40.79
Vendor/Writer Meetings	57.25	36.00	14.75
Postage	60.21	51.52	68.44
Ttl Street Newz Expenses	1275.86	1261.60	1315.98
Street Newz	545.00	850.00	135.00
Bread & Roses Revenue			
Grants (ViPirg \$650)	0.00	650.00	0.00
Total Bread & Roses Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bread & Roses Expenses			
Street Newz Donation	800.00	800.00	800.00
Ttl Bread & Roses Expenses	800.00	800.00	800.00
Bread & Roses	-800.00	-150.00	-800.00
Consolidated Ttl (SNZ + B&R)	-255.00	700.00	-665.00
Bread & Roses Bank Balance	2287.55	2510.46	1795.88
Conference Fund			110.00

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